



Town of Harpswell

P.O. Box 39

Harpswell, ME 04079

Recycling Committee Minutes January 24, 2018

Attendees: Chuck Perow, George Baker, Philip Conner, Jeff Stann, Jack Stokinger

Absent: Mike McCabe, Dave Chipman

Meeting called to order at 5:02PM

*****Minutes from December 20, 2017 meeting were not available and not approved.**

New Business Discussion:

Global Problems:

One of the global problems for our center is the recent change by China to stop buying US generated recycle materials on the world market. This is expected to cause the cost of recycling to increase.

Fortunately Chuck had previously suggested and implemented longer term recycling contracts. Since this involved a more than 1 year commitment by the town, it required approval by the BOS and a vote at the last town meeting both of which were accomplished. We now have price protection for 5 years via a contract for 3 years with two 1 year renewals @ \$28/ton which is the same as Topsham. However Topsham bales their cardboard and sells it elsewhere. Chuck indicated that we can not do this cost effectively. We use single sort recycling with no bags allowed.

Trash is burned for energy generation at cost to us of \$70/ton.

Local problems include:

Facility issues: George said that we have issues with the facility maintenance. We discussed that the compactors normally are expected to have a 15 year life cycle but ours are 18 years old and have been refurbished so that they are expected to last until 2020 when they are scheduled to be replaced. The backhoe, which vital to the operation, is scheduled for replacement this year.

Chuck said that renters who use the facility and often do not follow instructions causing problems. We discussed ways to inform the property owners that the rules need to be followed, and we need to provide the owners with information to post so that they can inform the renters. Last year, local real estate office were notified and given information to provide to renters. Articles in the Anchor have been run. Many property owners utilize AirB&B, HomeAway, etc. and do not use real estate agents. Other towns (Rockport?) have recently enacted ordinances dealing with short term renters. We should find out about this.

c. The recent fire at the center made obvious the need to familiarize the local firefighters with our facility. When they responded to the recent fire accidentally caused by a welder repairing the hydraulic doors, the firefighters appeared to be unfamiliar with the facility and thus were not nearly as positive in their actions as one might expect. Fortunately Chuck and the crew had the fire almost fully extinguished by the time the fire trucks arrived. We discussed contacting the local fire departments and suggest a mock drill or some other way to familiarize the firemen so that they can better respond to emergencies here. Dave Chipman could probably help with this.

How to better achieve the mission of the committee:

We briefly talked about trying to encourage re-use of materials or other discards; this has been tried in the past with very unsatisfactory results.

Chuck said he is considering providing cans or information about them for easier home recycle sorting.

We discussed the planting on the cap. Jeff offered to continue to gather information and recommend a mix and amount in 2 phases so that we can over-seed the area planted last year early and then later till and seed adjacent areas. Jeff recommended that November is the best time to mow which we are required to do.

Chuck offered to bring the December/annual tonnage report to the next meeting for review by the committee.

The meeting provided an interesting, educational discussion touching on problems, opportunities, and the operation of our facility. At future meeting we will further discuss some of these subjects.

Meeting adjourned at 6:45ish

Respectfully submitted,

Philip Conner